

INDEXA



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A non-profit organization for the enhancement of amateur radio, worldwide peace, and friendship
Daily Information Session—14.236 @ 23:30Z

Congo 2002—The African Adventure

From Núria Font, EA3WL, and Josep Gibert, EA3BT

“What are you going to do in the Congo?”

We had to answer this question many times after announcing that our next destination for 2002 would be an African country, unknown to most, but with a highly recognizable name. (Who hasn't heard of the comedy called *The Adventures of Tintin in the Congo*?)

Because it is not a remote country, it didn't seem like an interesting destination at first glance; however, because there have been three civil wars during the last 10 years—the last one very bloody—radio amateur activity has been null in the last years. In fact, the demand had to be great because the country was situated in the 38th place in the “Most Needed Countries” list published in September 2000 by the ARRL.

After choosing our destination, we started to work hard on the project. We made many phone calls and sent a lot of faxes till we discovered that we could acquire the licenses.

Next we had to choose a QTH. We didn't have many options because most hotels were destroyed during the last civil war and few de-



TN3B-TN3W QSL Card

cided to reopen. We chose the Meridien Hotel, a perfect place situated in the highest part of the capital, Brazzaville. We chose the capital over other parts of the country because the only secure places in the country are the main cities and it is highly recommended not to move away from them because there are still rebels that continue fighting around the capital and in the south of the country.

After several months of hard work, the day of departure finally arrived. It was May 16th when we went to the Barcelona airport and, after a short stop in Paris, took the plane that brought us to Brazzaville with more than 150 kg. of luggage. As in our last operation in Comoros

as D68BT and D68WL, we wanted to install two complete stations so we carried two transceivers; a linear amplifier; two switched power supplies; two laptops; two 3-element beams; wire dipoles for 40 and 80 meters; a 3-element 6 meter beam; a KAM for RTTY; and more than 100 meters of coaxial cable, ropes, masts, tools, etc.

The pleasant journey lasted more than 12 hours but when we arrived at Brazzaville things did not go as well. When we went to pick up our luggage we noticed that it was not complete. In fact, we didn't have any luggage. The only things that arrived at Brazzaville were the two beams and the equipment that we carried as hand luggage—nothing else. There was no coaxial cable, no masts, no ropes, and no change of clothes. NOTHING! And what was worse, the luggage was still in Paris and wouldn't arrive until the next flight which was the following Monday. We were going to lose at least 4 precious days of operation. This was a great upset for our plans but we couldn't do anything so we decided to go to the hotel and wait for better news.

(Continued on page 2)

inside...

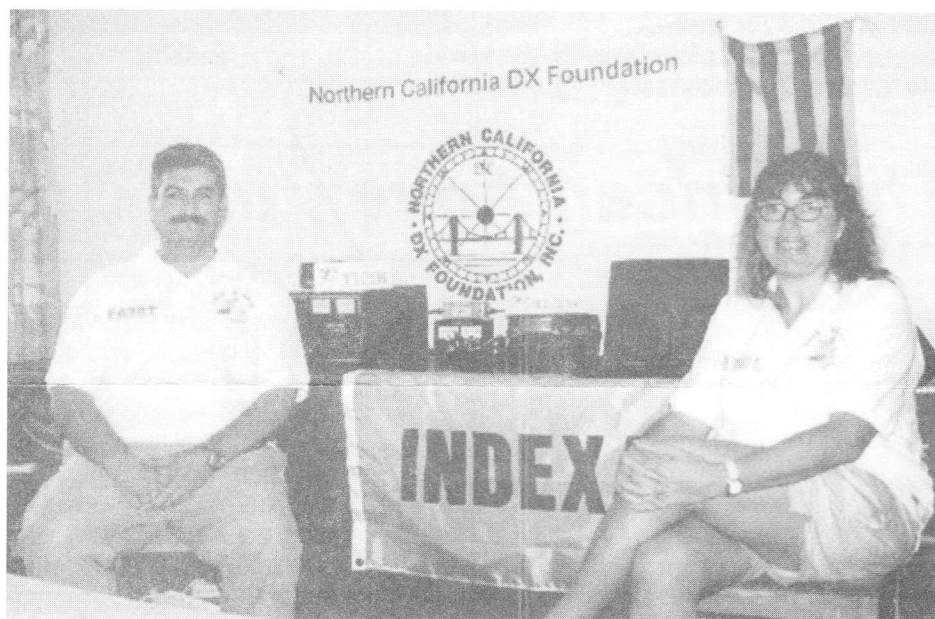
North Korea—P5/4L4FN

Staff Profile—W7WK

New Life Members & Extra Help

2002-2003 INDEXA Ballot

The African Adventure.....from page 1



Josep, EA3BT, and Núria, EA2WL

The next morning, Friday, we went to the Telecommunications Department and completed the formalities for the licenses. Then, with papers in hand, we went back to the hotel to start mounting the antennas so we would be prepared when the rest of the equipment arrived.

A great surprise was waiting for us at the hotel. There was a note in reception telling us that our lost luggage was already in the airport and we had to be there before 13:00 if we wanted to pick it up. It was 12:00 so we took a taxi and ran to the airport feeling happy about how lucky we had been.

When we arrived at the airport, the man responsible for the luggage had gone home because there were no more international flights expected that day so he had no reason to wait. Incredible, no? But this is Africa!

We were told to go back on Saturday morning but when we did the man wasn't there and wouldn't come until noon when an international flight was expected at 16:00 hours.

At midday we started our third journey to the airport and fortunately the man was there and could finally obtain our luggage, at least 2 days before ex-

pected. We rushed to the hotel and started to build up the antennas. We worked hard till the light ran out and continued on Monday morning.

Finally, it was 11:48 UTC when Josep sent his first CQ as TN3B on 10 meters. A huge pile-up roared in his headphones. I immediately threw my CQ as TN3W on 12 meters and another pile-up came to my ears. We both smiled happily, said goodbye to each other, and put ourselves to work. TN3B and TN3W were finally on the air and we didn't stop till noon on the 27th of May after 7 complete days of operation of about 18-19 hours per day. The only times we stopped were for dinner—we had neither breakfast nor lunch because the pileups didn't allow us to go—and for sleeping.

After that stressful week of radio, we logged nearly 26,000 QSOs in just 7 days with only two people. This must be a world record of some kind.

We activated 7 bands: 6, 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, and 40 meters, and used 3 modes: SSB, RTTY, and CW.

We made 24,199 QSOs-SSB, 664-CW, and 1107-RTTY.

With great satisfaction for our achievements, we closed down the

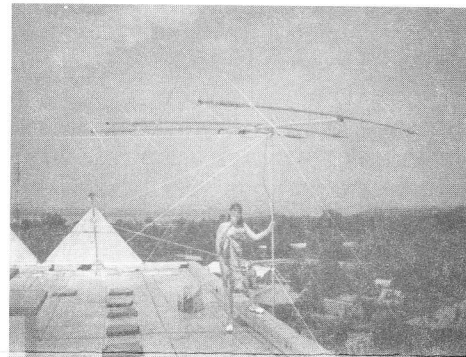
stations on Monday, May 27th, at 13:31Z.

We want to thank INDEXA and all the associations and people that gave their support to this project.

We also thank the staff of the Meridien Hotel in Brazzaville for their kind hospitality; Pere Galimany, EA3AJI, for his many hours of valuable time with us; Xavier Pedrerol, EA3BHK, for keeping our Web page updated while we were on the air; Dr. Bill Avery, K6GNX, and Yuki Deguchi, JI6KVR, for being our pilots and accepting the invitation to be part of this project; and all those who made a QSO with us and made this DXpedition become a great success.

Logs are available at <<http://www.ea3bt.com>>. QSL via EA3BT.

To everybody, TNX and hear you perhaps in the future...!!!



Núria, EA3WL-TN3W, with her 3-element antenna beaming USA



Josep, EA3BT-TN3B, assembling the 3-element beam

DXCC Desk Approves P5/4L4FN

After a long wait, North Korea, P5, has become a reality in many DX logs!

For several years, Ed, 4L4FN, has worked and resided in North Korea and during this time he has tried to obtain official, written permission to operate. Many are grateful to North Korea for rewarding Ed's efforts but none may be as grateful as Ed. "Upon my arrival in the DPR Korea in December 1998, I did not realize that I would be activating the most sought after DXCC country one day.



Ed's, P5/4L4FN, QSL Card

"It has been a long march to make my life-time dream come true and to make the DPR Korea a part of this great world DX community of ours. I am grateful to...dedicated supporters...for supporting me at various times in my adventure...and all my friends in DPR Korea who have made our desires possible. With this wonderful experience, I am now extending my stay here until June 2003, securing that P5 will be logged for all those who Deserve."

Ed operates from his apartment in Pyongyang, and prefers to operate near 21.225 MHz. Occasionally, he has operated RTTY near 28.018 MHz.

Ed's QSL manager, Bruce Paige, KK5DO, has asked that DXers be considerate and refrain from making multiple QSOs in order to give everyone an opportunity to make a first QSO. He also warns that he will post lists of those who make three QSOs with Ed.

The DXCC Desk in Newington has approved P5/4L4FN for DXCC credit.

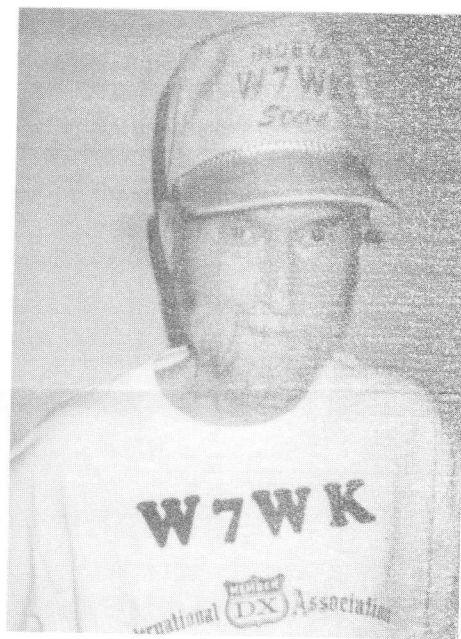
INDEXA staff member

Steve, W7WK by Doug Laubach, WQ7B

We welcome Steve Victor, W7WK, as a new member of the INDEXA staff. Steve, a graduate of Montana University is a Montana native, born in the Big Sky State an undisclosed number of years ago. He was first licensed in 1995 and became an Extra Class ham only a year later. Now, just 6 years later, he has worked (drum roll, please) 320 countries!!! This indicates what his friends already know, he is a true DXer 24/7.

Steve relates that he first got hooked into this aspect of the hobby when he worked his first DX, ES7FQ and ES1WW. He now has a Yaesu FT-1000MP Mark V, an Ameritron AL-1200, and a HyGain 72-ft. expandable tower planted in about 150 cubic feet of concrete and topped off with a HyGain TH5MKII. You will often hear Steve during contests if he is not watching NASCAR races instead. Steve is also one of the founders and vice-president of the local area DX club, The Northern Rockies DX Association, NRDXA.

Like most of us in our early days, Steve discovered that the INDEXA session was a good place for DX info and QSL routes, and soon he was a regular listener and frequent participant in the session. That was back in the good ol' days of those big thick callbooks (remember those?), but Steve quickly advanced into the computer age and taught himself HTML programming for making Web sites. And what a Web site he did come up with! Check out his site



Steve Victor, W7WK

Photo by Doug Laubach, WQ7B

at <http://dxer.home.att.net> and you will see one of the finest ham radio Web sites on the Internet. It includes a DX-expedition page, log search pages, QSL cards, an extensive QSL route database and a callsign search. I guarantee you will be absolutely impressed with his work. And, while you're there, don't forget to sign his guestbook.

When you hear W7WK on the session, point your antennas toward Great Falls, Montana, and give Steve a big "howdy!" and welcome him as a valuable asset to the INDEXA staff.

New Life Members.....

K4JC N5DUW N7CQQ N3CY WA3GFM and N2JSB

Extra Help Provided By.....

JA1EM	W1WRN	W5KFN	WA9YFV	WB9WHQ	N0GWR	WQ7B	KB6KTV
W9BNO	WB4W	KM4LS	W6UPI	N8BEE	W7DPW	W7KH	K4ELK
WDX2TAU	NI6P	WA3JAT	N4UCJ	K7EWG	AB4HR	W4LM	WDX3JFH
N5SJS	WB5SYT	K4KXO	W9LA	WA2BMH	W6RUJ	K4TY	W8WC
WA2QQF	WZ4P	W1LLU	VE2WY	E21EIC	VE7OJ	W8WOJ	KB7V
K3SWZ	K3FK	W4PJI	KR6DE	KD7KH	N6FUN	K8ESQ	IK4AU

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Vice-President	AA7UC			
Secretary-Treasurer	W4UNP			
Directors	LA8CJ			
	W4MPY			
	W9RG			
	ZL1AMO			
	DJ9ZB			

Please vote and return your ballot to the election officer no later than September 30, 2002.

Election Officer

Bill Jennings, W4UNP
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by
Wayne Mills, N7NG

*A DXpedition manual co-published by
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